

**April 14, 2014 Community Open House - City Arts**  
**Feedback Received** (04/30/14)  
**Attendance** - 31 people (plus 7 Committee members and 6 staff)

**Staff Summary of Feedback -**

- The established urban core ranked as the top priority area for future infrastructure investment, growth and redevelopment, closely followed in priority ranking by the downtown – the suburbs were a distant third in ranking.
- Quality of life infrastructure investments are important to ensure future job and business growth in our community.
- Important for the city to invest in improved public transit.

**Detailed Responses to Questions -**

► **Handout Question: How Best for Wichita to Grow? Rank the following three Wichita growth areas according to which you think best supports the future growth, prosperity and quality of life of our community.** 1=best, 2=second best, 3=third best (19 complete responses)

**Rank**

|   |                        |          |                          |                          |
|---|------------------------|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Established Urban Core | 53% best | 42% 2 <sup>nd</sup> best | 5% 3 <sup>rd</sup> best  |
| 2 | Downtown               | 42% best | 47% 2 <sup>nd</sup> best | 11% 3 <sup>rd</sup> best |
| 3 | Suburbs                | 5% best  | 11% 2 <sup>nd</sup> best | 84% 3 <sup>rd</sup> best |

***General Thoughts and Comments:*** (Responses organized by themes)

Growth patterns – urban core

- Suburban growth appears to be the current priority for the city – I feel the established urban core should be a higher priority
- Improve the established urban core by creating more jobs and industry (offer tax incentives/cuts). Casinos can be a financial benefit to our community – a new convention center should be a priority
- Investment in the established urban core appears to be the most effective way for future infrastructure investment (transportation, air quality, preserving agricultural land) – “infill” plans in the works within the next year
- Concentrating future growth within the established urban core is best way to proceed (recycle old buildings with influx of new businesses and residents, increase walkability) – a more vibrant city culture and economy will be the result
- The focus on downtown investment in recent years has rejuvenated downtown. Now is the time to shift focus of infrastructure investment in the established urban core.
- Growth within the established urban core provides the best return on public infrastructure investment
- Need a vibrant core to help our city grow
- Improve the established urban core as a part of Scenario #3 with a 1% sales tax increase (to support investment categories #1 and #20 – secure a long-term water supply immediately)

Growth patterns – downtown

- Encourage WalMart to build a store in downtown with parking; encourage next-gen aviation industries (drones, pilot-less vehicles)
- Keep Old Town strong to promote downtown revitalization
- Bring activity to downtown in the evenings
- Investment in a new central library and more efficient public transit will bring more people into the downtown and established urban core
- Support additional redevelopment in the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods – current redevelopment projects are too modest. The city needs to be more dense, and there are too many parking lots
- No additional investment in downtown – should stand on their own
- Don't spend property tax dollars downtown

### Growth patterns – suburbs

- Suburban sprawl has been demonstrated to have a negative impact on physical and economic health of a community
- Continued suburban growth is unsustainable - we can't allow existing buildings, properties and infrastructure to deteriorate
- Wichita should not continue to expand – don't have the water to support it
- Follow Portland's example of limiting suburban growth and encouraging downtown revitalization. Human infrastructure is more important than bricks and mortar

### Growth patterns – other comments

- Can't afford the \$35 million central library
- All three scenarios are similar from a cost/revenue perspective. Local government can't afford to subsidize developers or enhance existing assets and facilities
- Let the market determine growth areas

### Transit

- Public transit service to the suburbs and surrounding communities (Mulvane, Derby Goddard, Maize) should be a priority.
- Our current transit system is insufficient. The proposed Transit plan would benefit many of our citizens
- A good public transit system is essential to the success of our community – even simple changes can improve the system.
- Support Scenario #3 – need better transit service and coverage. Without public transit, I would not be able to keep my job or pay taxes
- Support Scenario #3 – need to expand transit service and coverage
- Expanded transit service and coverage will increase economic development and quality of life
- Prefer Scenario #3 with expanded public transit
- Can't afford the Transit 2013 Vision Plan

### Other Investments

- We need to keep taxes low to attract more businesses and jobs
- Build a HOPE scholarship to address student debt and help poor kids. The 900 faith communities in the county are key player in the future of our community - don't listen to just the usual suspects
- We've already wasted too much public money (tax breaks, etc.) on "economic development" – a sales tax is a regressive tax.
- Any sales tax over ¼ cent will drive big-ticket retail sales away from our community
- Need to maintain our current infrastructure (streets, neighborhood lighting, water supply and sewer system, code enforcement on existing derelict properties, maintain Century II)
- Can't afford to enhance or expand our public infrastructure
- Need to spend more on public safety services

► **Board Question: Please list important criteria that you would like elected officials to consider as they make future community infrastructure spending and cost-reduction decisions.**

- Economic growth and job creation
- Quality of life investments:
  - parks, open space
  - will attract jobs and people
  - Wichita has to be a place people want to live ... then jobs will come
  - advancing community quality of life in order to help promote economic development
- No new bypasses – only increased demand creates actual new job growth, bypass will just shift existing jobs
- Develop downtown – the rest will follow (arts, housing, grocery/retail)
- Promote Delano – history and residential neighborhood
- Alternate transportation (bike and ped) – 1/3 of Wichita does not drive
- Complement/support WSU efforts to bring new jobs – also NIAR and WATC
- Help the poor

► **Board Question:** *What thoughts and comments do you have?* (Responses organized by themes)

Transit

- Improve public transit and diversify new industries and jobs with tax cuts and incentives
- We need a public transit system good enough so that no one needs a car
- Privatize the public transit system

Downtown

- Continued downtown and river development needed to attract offices and businesses, while ensuring opportunity space for the Wichita arts community. Invest in the urban core while limiting continued suburban growth
- Keep investing in Old Town to continue to drive downtown revitalization
- Invest in downtown
- Downtown and river corridor development is more important for evening social events
- Include the new central library as a part of downtown development
- We need a vibrant downtown and inner-ring neighborhoods – also good transit. A strong arts scene will bring people and jobs

Miscellaneous

- Take care of basic infrastructure first (water, sewer, stormwater) - forget bicycle facilities and public transit
- Maintain what infrastructure we have
- Make Wichita more business friendly
- Figure out a good way to support entrepreneurs – grow our own businesses and jobs
- More development density needed
- Charge for public parking
- Thanks for sincerely and thoroughly reaching out to citizens and tax payers